

United States Senate

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FINANCE

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HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

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JOINT COMMITTEE
ON TAXATION

May 3, 2010

Kevin Crowley, PH.D.
Director
Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board
500 Fifth Street, NW
Sixth Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Dr. Crowley:

I am writing to strongly urge members of the Board to update its 2005 report entitled, "Assessment of the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program."

As the original author of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) program, I have always believed that those who became ill as a result of the nuclear weapons testing done at the Nevada Test Site should be fairly compensated by the federal government. I was also responsible for expanding the RECA program in 2000 and ensured that program was fully funded for the life of the program. At my request, in 2002 Congress provided the Institute of Medicine funding to evaluate whether or not the RECA program should be further expanded. Members of the Board came to Utah and other areas that were impacted by the Nevada Test Site testing to listen to those who were injured and determine whether additional diseases, geographic areas or classes of workers should be covered through the RECA program. As you know, the NAS 2005 report recommended that RECA should be more scientifically based; Congress should establish a new process based on science to determine eligibility for federal compensation; and in most cases, it was unlikely that exposure to radioactive fallout was a substantial contributing cause of cancer.

I was deeply disappointed by the findings of the 2005 NAS report. Therefore, I request that the Board update its 2005 report and make recommendations to Congress on whether additional geographic areas, diseases or classes of workers should be covered through the RECA program. When reviewing this matter, I believe that it is extremely important that Board members take the time to visit Utah and other states impacted by the Nevada Test Site testing and meet with those who were harmed. In

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addition, Board members must meet with scientists who have conducted research supporting RECA expansions. These studies should include but not be limited to the National Cancer Institute and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study which estimated that 800,000 individuals who lived or were born in the U.S. between 1951 and 2000 would contract cancer as a result of fallout from the Nevada Test Site. In addition, the Board should review studies conducted by researcher Richard L. Miller, author of the book, Under the Cloud: Decades of Nuclear Testing.

I would appreciate your consideration of my request and look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my Health Policy Director, Pattie DeLoatche, in my Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Orrin Hatch", with a large circular flourish at the beginning.

Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senator

OGH:pdd